THE DRUMBEAT
Student media since 1927
Tyler Junior College

Vol. 89 | Issue 10 | February 26 - March 18, 2021

Black History Month
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Photo by Chris Swann

# BELOW ZERO

## Record breaking temperatures, weather swept through East Texas

**By Andrea Valdez**
Broadcast News Director

In the week leading up to the impending snowstorm in Texas, no one could have predicted the amount of damage the state would experience during this historic event. Instructions were given on how to layer up to keep warm during these frigid temperatures. Grocery store shelves once full of food were completely bare, and pets accustomed to being outside were given shelter indoors.

The sudden drop in temperatures caused many Texans to take precautions to ensure their safety and keep their families warm. The lowest temperature was -6 degrees on Feb. 15, which broke the original record of 16 degrees set in 2007, according to the National Weather Service website. The Tyler area received about nine inches of snow on Feb. 16, which was the highest amount for the area that week. However, since the state is not used to this type of weather, issues occurred statewide such as power loss.

Oncor, Texas' largest energy delivery company, reported 17,681 active outages in Texas on Feb. 16, affecting nearly 1,321,215 customers. The Electric Reliability Council of Texas reported the highest number of outages affected almost 400,000 households. Electric companies were rolling out blackouts to preserve electricity causing it to turn on and off for periods of time. However, even with the scheduled blackouts, many homes went long hours and days without power.

State officials also warned residents to stay indoors and to stay off the roads, as they had become treacherous. The week before the snowstorm, freezing rain fell on main roads in bigger cities causing the roads to ice. On Feb. 11, a massive car pileup involving over 130 vehicles on Interstate-35W in Fort Worth left six dead and dozens with serious injuries.

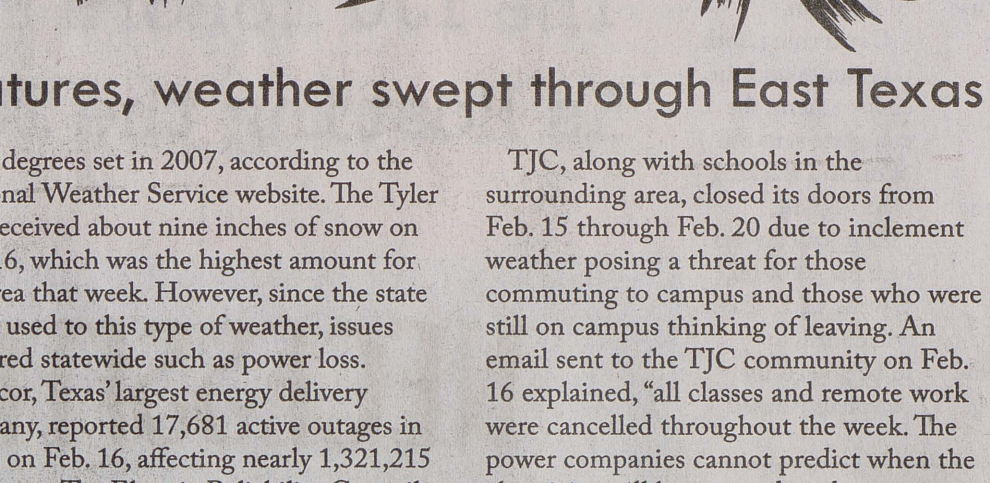
TJC, along with schools in the surrounding area, closed its doors from Feb. 15 through Feb. 20 due to inclement weather posing a threat for those commuting to campus and those who were still on campus thinking of leaving. An email sent to the TJC community on Feb. 16 explained, "all classes and remote work were cancelled throughout the week. The power companies cannot predict when the electricity will be restored, and we urge everyone to take necessary precautions to stay safe."

TJC freshmen Adam Tudor, who lives in Ornelas Hall, shared his experience.

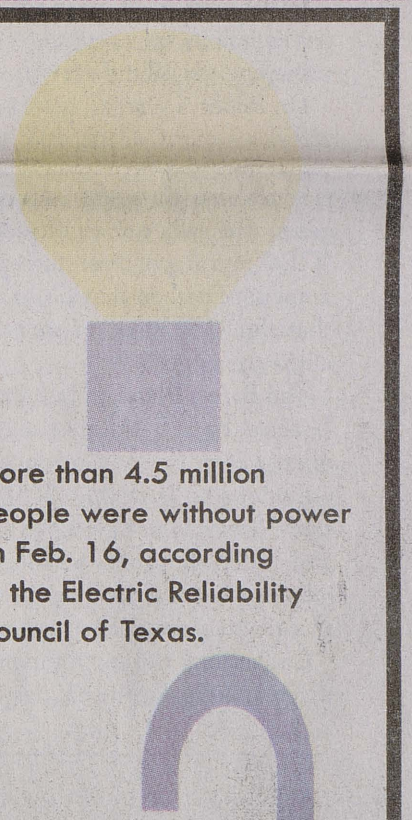
"On the first day we experienced power outages for a large majority of the day. It was probably a total of an hour of power for the entire day in small increments," Tudor said.

Along with the loss of electricity around the state, many homes and TJC were affected by the loss of water, as well. The low temperatures caused damages to water pipes that led to contamination in the water system. Tyler issued a water boil notice beginning on Feb. 17 and was lifted on Feb. 23. According to the City of Tyler website,

**Winter storm continued on page 3**



**Photos by Chris Swann**
Snow causes multiple issues for Tyler and TJC, including damages to pipes under streets.




**Graphics by Michael Bald**

# HTeaO brews up new beverage options for Tyler community

By Jessica King
Staff Writer

HTeaO, an individually owned sweet tea franchise, is opening its doors this spring on Fifth Street across from the Tyler Junior College campus where Weinerland served customers for many years. The business began in founders Gary and Kim Hutchens' burger restaurant called Buns Over Texas. Here they sold their flavored iced tea, according to hteao.com.

Tonya Clark, the current owner of HTeaO, and her husband began their journey with HTeaO in 2018 when Clark's supervisor introduced them to the franchise, Clark said.

Photo by Victoria Deal

HTeaO has begun construction replacing the former, Weinerland, across from the Tyler Junior College Campus on Fifth Street. HTeaO offers multiple teas and beverages to customers.

According to Clark, HTeaO opened its first franchise, corporate store in Midland, Texas, so her and her husband visited the store. After visiting, Clark said they decided it was a great concept and committed to the franchise in 2019.

"It is mine and my husband's dream to own our own business. Everybody in our family has owned their own business and this is kind of like our plan to give something fun to the community and be able to work together," Clark said. "We are bringing it to Tyler because we think Tyler is an amazing community and we think it'll do well by the college — bring something new and fresh.

According to Clark, after committing to the franchise in 2019, they searched Tyler for a location that fit the "hometown around the corner," vibe that HTeaO provides. The Clark's picked Fifth Street not only because it right across the street from TJC's campus, but "the community is great, the people are welcoming," Clark said.

"We were sad that that was kind of an iconic spot in the community and we're hoping that HTeaO will fill the void of something new and fresh there by TJC," Clark said.

HTeaO is projected to open later in the spring 2021 semester, with the construction wrapping up within the next month, Clark said. Dr. Juan E. Mejia, president and CEO of TJC, commented on this business relocating near campus.

"TJC provides amazing and positive economic impact to the entire greater East Texas region, and it is our sincere desire that business and industry continue to choose us when making a determination of where to launch, establish or relocate," Mejia said.

According to hteao.com, customers can expect a multitude of sweet and unsweet tea flavors to quench their thirst including regular, mint, turbo citrus (energy tea), blueberry green, almond green, peach ginger, watermelon, coconut, mango fresco, Georgia peach, wild raspberry and Ryan Palmer. Customers have their choice of sizes ranging from 24 ounces to one-gallon jugs. HTeaO also offers a fruit bar where customers can come in and, due to COVID-19, pick up a pre-made two-ounce cup of "fruit or mint leaves or whatever you want to add," Clark said. The tea flavors can also be mixed and matched. Drive thru is also available where, along with the tea, an individual pre-packaged cup of fruit will be handed out as well, Clark said.

As the City of Tyler and TJC welcome HTeaO to the community, we "wish the very best to every entrepreneur, investor and innovator, as we work together to provide gainful employment opportunities for our communities, and we pledge our commitment and support for the overall win," Mejia said.

# President Biden proceeds on plans to prevent climate change

By Brianna Murphy
News Editor

The Biden administration seeks climate crisis relief while Texas Gov. Greg Abbott believes it threatens the Texas economy.

Within his first months of office, President Joseph R. Biden plans to establish changes to environmental policy. According to biden.org, "Biden believes the Green New Deal is a crucial framework for meeting the climate challenges we face."

In the president's green plan, greenhouse gas emissions are a central focus, along with reshaping the oil industry.

Dr. Rebecca Owens, professor of geology at Tyler Junior College, said "the most concerning aspect of fossil fuels is the production of large amounts of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide." Owen's said "[The] burning of fossil fuels produces a large amount of carbon dioxide, so the more we use these fuels the more we are contributing to climate change."

The Biden Plan's stated goals are to "ensure the U.S. achieves a 100% clean energy economy and reaches net-zero emissions no later than 2050." While Abbot said, "Texas is not going to stand idly by and watch the Biden administration kill jobs in Midland, in Odessa or any other place across the entire region."

Concerning the environmental damage, the usage of oil is not the only aspect disrupting ecosystems. Owens said, "it is important to note that this is only part of the problem."

Human made structures and the lack of open fields can cause more damage to the environment compared to fracking and oil. "We are concurrently adding large amounts of carbon dioxide and replacing our natural environment with human-made structures that do not recycle carbon," Owens said.

Abbott believes the Biden Plan will harm Texas' economy, as oil and gas industries thrive within the Lone Star State.

Thousands of jobs will be lost if oil and gas productions slow down and many Texas representatives stress against the Biden Plan.

Concerning both economics and the environment, the complete removal of oil and fracking is unadvised. "There will always be a place for oil," Owens said. "There will continue to be a need for petroleum-based products like plastic. We can reduce our carbon footprint just by cutting oil usage as individuals, though."

According to biden.org, the Biden administration argues it will alleviate the job losses and economic stress, through "creating jobs and new solutions to reduce emissions in planes, ocean-going vessels, and more."

According to the Houston Chronicle, Abbott said, "it's wrong for a president or anybody else to act like their job can be ended today, and they can just be retrained to do some other job."

According to NASA, the current global temperature and carbon emissions continue to make a slow, but steady rise.

"As a result of our disruption of the planet's natural carbon cycle, we are seeing drastic changes to our climate," Owens said.

Texas and the Biden Administration will continue to debate over the matter, as no compromise has been reached to this date.

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# Collaborative Bell Tower Arts Journal features student work

**By Ashley Wilkinson**
Contributing Writer

The beloved Bell Tower chimes every half hour. It creates a symphony with the drum beat of students typing lecture notes on a Microsoft Word document, the vibration of cheers from the stands as the Apaches win another sports game and the bassline of students' dread as their professor announces a pop-quiz. Just like the everyday song of TJC students attending their classes, the campus has its own song. This song is the harmony of all students from all different backgrounds and all different majors blending to artfully create TJC's student body.

The 14th volume of the annual Bell Tower Arts Journal, a collective project from the English, Visual Communications and Fine Arts departments, is scheduled to be published later this semester. Students submitted their work online before Nov. 12, 2020, and a committee composed of three faculty members and three students from the involved departments selected the best pieces for publication.

"[The Bell Tower Arts Journal] is a huge inspiration," Art Department Chair Derrick White said. "You get the validation of something that is important to you, that you have made in say a painting class, that gets accepted by a selection committee, and it gets published in a legitimate, full-color magazine. You are a published artist."

The Bell Tower Arts Journal was founded in 2006 by Dr. Linda Gary, department chair of Humanities, Philosophy and General Studies. Gary was previously employed by a school that had a literary arts journal, and when she became an employee at TJC, she was interested in the TJC literary arts journal at the time.

According to Gary, the literary arts journal then was open for both student and faculty submissions. It eventually got to a point where only faculty members were getting their pieces published. Therefore, Gary lead for the movement of the creation of a literary arts journal solely for students. The dean at the time was able to fund Gary's literary arts journal with approximately $3,000, and the journal was officially created.

From there, the new literary arts journal needed a name. A committee met and submitted their name ideas. Judith Bateman, a professor of Humanities, Philosophy and General Studies, submitted "The Bell Tower," and it was selected.

"Just as the Bell Tower at Tyler Junior College chimes on the half hour to mark the passage of time, it reminds the students of the harmony which surrounds them in their educational pursuits," Bateman wrote in 2006 and is now printed in a section labeled "About the Title" at the beginning of every volume of the Bell Tower Arts Journal. "Music, dance, theatre, art, athletics and academics blend to make Tyler Junior College a beacon to the community, the state and the world at large. The Bell Tower Arts Journal proudly hails the accomplishments of its hallowed halls and beckons those who would seek both its tradition and the promise of tomorrow."

The first volume of the Bell Tower Arts Journal was published in black-and-white but soon moved to full color.

Students in the Visual Communications Department participate in a cover design contest, and the selection committee votes on the cover design. From there, a team of these students design the page layout for the arts journal.

"One of the neat things is that this is what the Visual Communications department is training students to do," White said. "If history is any guide, [the 2021 Bell Tower Arts Journal] should be ready by April or sometime after Spring Break."

Photo by Ashley Wilkinson

A collection of all 13 published volumes of the Bell Tower Arts Journal is displayed in Art Department Chair Derrick White's office.

# **Winter storm:** Weather damages pipes around Texas, campus

Photo by Victoria Deal

Due to the storm, construction workers had to dig down in order to fix pipes that burst. This left students and many Tyler residents without water.

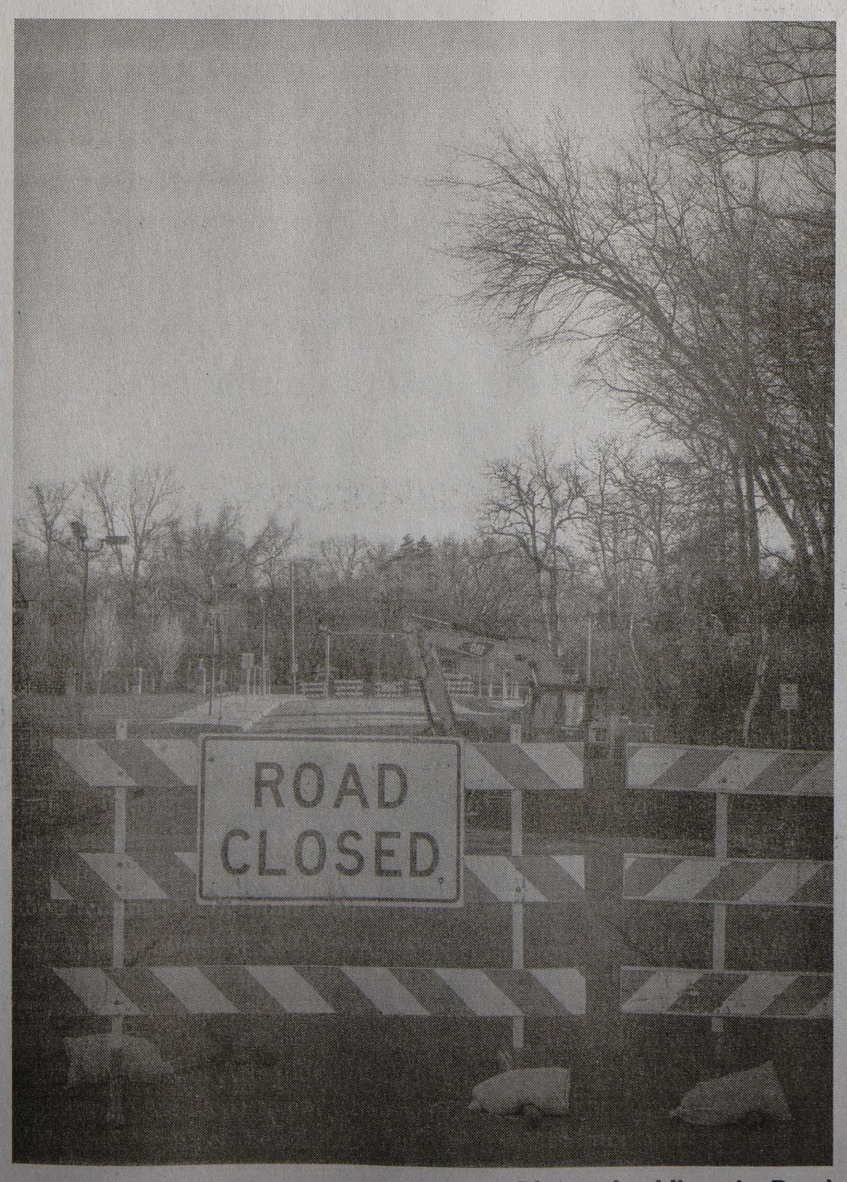



Photo by Victoria Deal

South Palmer Avenue is now under construction to fix pipes. Alternate routes have been given to get through campus.

From Page 1

water must be boiled before consumption, which includes brushing teeth, drinking, washing of the hands and or face, etc. Residential Life and Housing passed out water bottles to students because of the water contamination.

Lauren Taylor, a freshman at TJC, said "They did pass out bottles of water for the first day, then they let all the students know of a water purifier in the gym in Ornelas A that they could refill their water bottles with."

Pipes had burst on campus that not only affected how students were getting clean water, but also damaged certain areas on campus, including Chick-fil-A.

In a video captured by Sydney Robinson, a student living in Crossroads Hall where the Chick-fil-A is located, a pipe burst from the ceiling causing ceiling tiles to crumble to the floor and water was leaking from the ceiling where the pipe was, flooding the first floor of the dorms. The pipe bursting triggered the fire alarm in the dorm, and students living in Crossroads Hall evacuated and took shelter in neighboring buildings such as Bateman Hall and the housing office to keep warm and charge phones.

The damages on the main campus left over from the snowstorm are currently being worked on by facilities and construction.

Director of Facilities and Construction Mark Gartman said in an email, "As everyone knows we had electrical outages and water outages on campus over multiple days along with very frigid below freezing temperatures for about 4 to 5 days. As you can imagine we have experienced damage. The damage included busted water lines, busted sprinkler system lines, busted coils in our air handling equipment, and stuff we probably haven't found yet."

South Palmer Avenue near the TJC soccer fields experienced damages to a broken water main and damaged inlet box underground after the storm caused the soil to shift under the asphalt and ground.

"When we repair these lines, we have to break through the asphalt and dig down past the pipes to isolate the break where water is coming down," Tyler Public Works and Utilities Public Information Officer LouAnn Campbell said.

With South Palmer Avenue closed, alternate routes to campus include South Baxter Avenue, South Mahon Avenue and South Porter Avenue.

A timeline is yet to be determined on when those damages will fully be repaired.

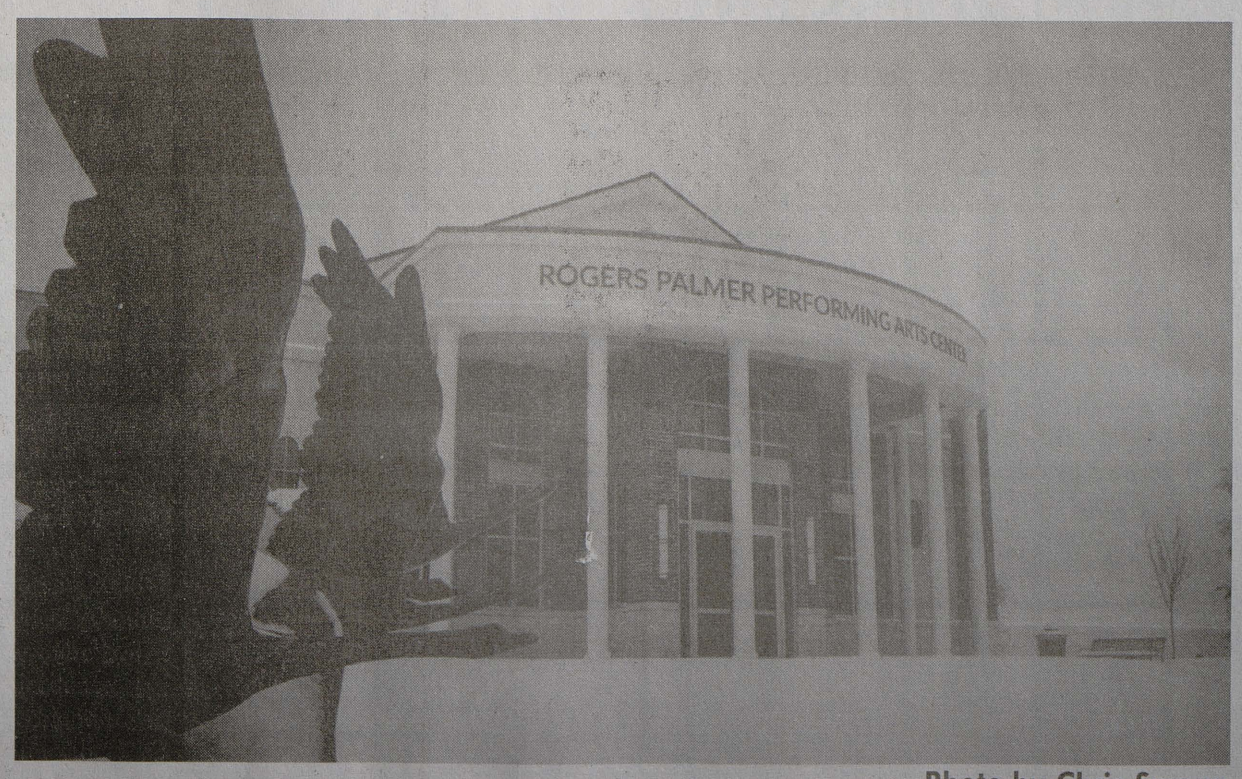


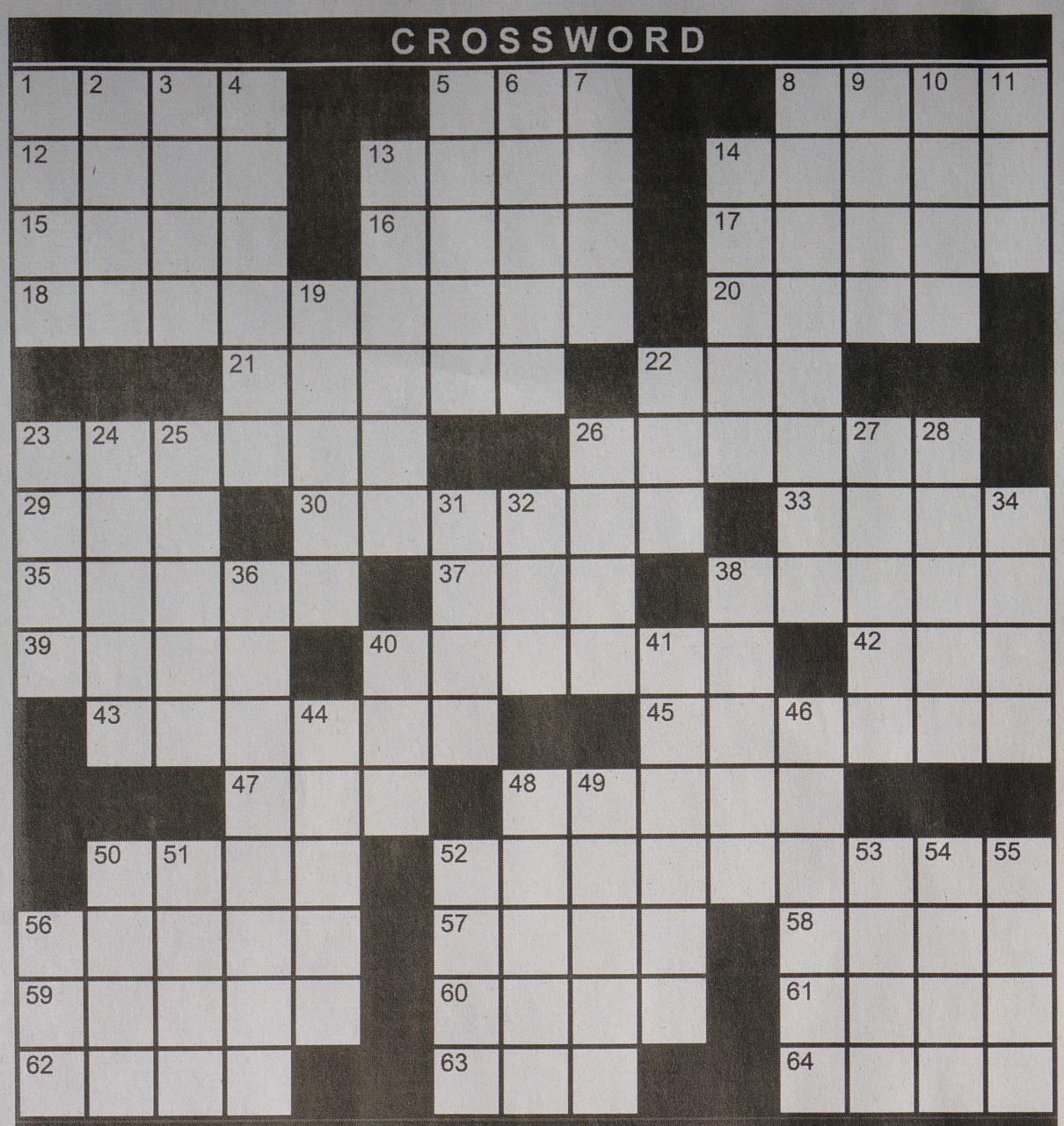

Photo by Chris Swann

The newly constructed Rogers Palmer Performing Arts Center is covered in ice.

***For more pictures of TJC during the winter storm, visit thedrumbeat.com.***

# THEME: GOLDEN AGE OF TV

## CROSSWORD



**ACROSS**
1. *Quiz show whistleblower, _____ Stempel
5. Time std.
8. "_____ Like it Hot" movie
12. Walkie-talkie word
13. Wild hog
14. Blender setting
15. Coniferous tree
16. Of long ago
17. Gastric problem
18. *A show that had a Ball
20. Surveyor's map
21. Changes to a manuscript
22. Mai follower
23. Get a move on
26. *Superman portrayer
29. Knot-tying words
30. Like unskilled work
33. Play with a bow
35. New Mexico's state flower
37. Will Ferrell's Christmas classic
38. On the radio
39. Nobel Peace Prize capital
40. Beat around the bush
42. Toddler
43. SAT administrator
45. Software plug-ins
47. Facebook photo option
48. Indulgence of impulses
50. Brees or Barrymore
52. *"Dragnet" sergeant
56. Old Brazilian coins
57. Pakistan's official language
58. *"Your Show of Shows" comedian Reiner
59. Novelist Zola
60. Not made up
61. *"The _____ of Night"
62. Extinct bird
63. Call minus c
64. Gloom's companion

**DOWN**
1. Arizona tribe
2. Bad to the bone
3. Nevada city near Lake Tahoe
4. Warrant for officer promotion with no pay
5. As opposed to stay in
6. Chagall and Anthony
7. 3-pointer in basketball
8. *"Toast of the Town" host
9. Willy of "Free Willy"
10. Track event
11. Always, to a poet
13. Reference to the writer
14. Between larvae and adults
19. Allergic reaction to bee sting
22. _____ Aviv
23. *Ranger's call to Silver
24. Sunbaked, archaically speaking
25. Wall or pedestal support
26. Kon-Tiki, e.g.
27. One of the Muses
28. Offspring
31. Getting warm
32. Not in good health
34. Tiny leftovers
36. *Abbott's comedic partner
38. Online purchase
40. *Marjorie Reynolds in "The Life of Riley"
41. Scolding
44. Schoolmarm's whip
46. Defrosted
48. Popular winter boot brand
49. Put it to the metal
50. Audition tape
51. SWAT attack
52. France/ Switzerland border mountain range
53. Carpenter's groove
54. Ben Affleck's 2013 Oscar winner
55. Original matter
56. *Buttons or Skelton

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***Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.***

**Crossword and Sudoku solutions will be online at thedrumbeat.com.**

# Review: 'Judas and the Black Messiah' stuns

**By Chris Crymes**
Entertainment Editor

There has been no shortage of narratives on racial injustice over the past year. With the murder of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Atatiana Jefferson and many others at the hands of police and sheriff departments nationwide, artists across the nation have voiced their disgust and resistance to the system at hand. Throughout 2020 artists joined protests to fight the racist actions done by our government and perpetuated by the system. Part of me was looking forward to how filmmakers would tackle the topics of police brutality and racial and financial inequality.

This part of me was disappointed by Aaron Sorkin's rather trite messaging in "Trial of the Chicago Seven." While admittedly well shot and well acted, the film's shallow script and overbearing score made the film feel a bit hollow and too much like every other Sorkin-penned product. "Judas and the Black Messiah" is the opposite - a mature, refined film that pushes to educate the ignorant about misunderstood people and organizations and the tragic outcomes that result from injustice.

"Judas and the Black Messiah" is the story of the betrayal of Fred Hampton, Illinois chapter chairman of the Black Panther Party in the latter half of the 1960s by FBI informant William O'Neal but, like forged police reports, this sentence is all too simple.

William O'Neal was a self-confessed career criminal. After his death in 1990, his uncle told the Chicago Reader his nephew had "been in trouble for everything from car theft and home invasion to kidnapping and torture." When this life of crime caught up to him, an FBI agent told O'Neal he would look over all these crimes in exchange for inside information on the Black Panthers as an informant. This is where he met and doomed revolutionary Fred Hampton, a man known in his time for negotiating a peace among Chicago's most powerful street gangs in the name of unity and equality as well as founding the "Rainbow Coalition:" an alliance of the Black Panthers, Students for a Democratic Society, Young Patriots Organization, and the Young Lords. Hampton also was integral to community activism. Under his leadership, the Panthers' institutions like people's clinics and free breakfast program flourished, soon growing to include morning political education classes for children, more children's meal programs

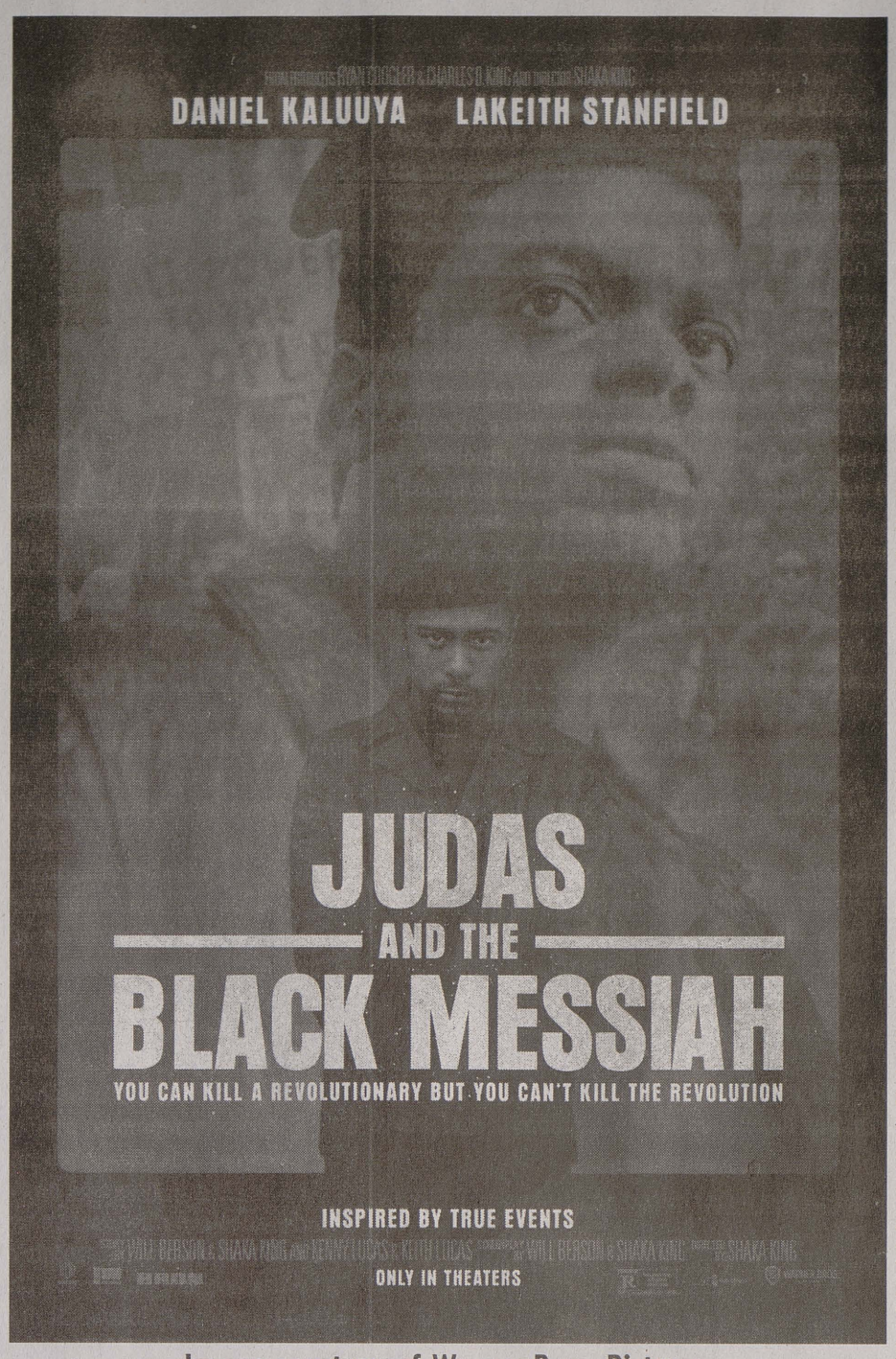



Image courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures

and community police supervision. The FBI used information on Hampton's life provided by O'Neal to murder him in the middle of the night in his home, like Breonna Taylor and others. Writer and activist Akua Njeri, known then as Deborah Johnson, was also present at the raid. She was pregnant with Hampton's son when the police fired over 90 shots into their apartment, frighteningly similar to cases like Taylor's and Jefferson's.

Not satisfied to only tell a timely true story, the film masterfully utilizes every cinematic technique to push this message. Framing, direction, color, original score, real-life audio; you name it, "Judas and the Black Messiah" uses it to full effectiveness, but the performances and the direction of the film truly stand out.

Daniel Kaluuya and Lakeith Stanfield embody their real-life counterparts, Fred Hampton and Will O'Neal. Kaluuya manages to precisely capture the cadence of not only Hampton's world-class abilities as an orator, but subtle intricacies of a man who is torn by his devotion to his community and his responsibilities as a man. Stanfield delivers a soulful depiction of a man mentally shredded by self-hate in the name of his own freedom. The film's lack of outright explanation of O'Neal's motives for working with the FBI are more than made up by Stanfield's immense performance.

Most emotionally intense stories like this rely on characters delivering big moments of feeling, which this movie does have plenty of, but "Judas and the Black Messiah's" characters also breathe beautifully intimate moments. A couple's first sip of coffee as they steal flirtatious glances at each other. Someone nervously reaching for a cigarette only to remember there are none in their jacket, since they don't wear this one outside of gatherings. Moments like these create real characters to fill this true story that will stick with a viewer long after the credits roll.

This is Shaka King's most extensive project by far and it seems this talented filmmaker has hit his creative stride. King and cinematographer Sean Bobbitt utilize framing and lighting to subconsciously implant the film's message with impressive subtlety. One example that stands out is the usage of levels to convey how people view the person they're talking to. FBI overseers tower over O'Neal while chastising. They say they are there to help him. Telling him he just has to work with them and they'll "take care of him" while they impose over him and never offer real help. Hampton and the Black Panthers, on the other hand, immediately get down on O'Neal's level to communicate with him, even when interrogating or chastising. This is just one example of a film full of framing and lighting tricks that subtly send messages.

If you're interested in digging deeper into the Black Panther Party and the FBI's involvement in illegal investigation, catch the premiere on HBO Max.

Image courtesy of Netflix

# Review: 'Malcolm & Marie' carries great themes but lacks connections

**By Michael Bald**
Managing and Design Editor

In the apocalyptic blizzard that engulfed Texas several days ago, I scrolled through my watch list on Netflix trying to find a new release to review. I stumbled across a movie starring former Disney star Zendaya (emphasis on the "former") and John David Washington. The whole film takes place in one night and revolves around these two actors...literally no one else… for almost two hours. "What do they do?" you may ask. Well, they argue about stuff.

The End.

Despite my pessimistic synopsis, "Malcolm & Marie" was actually a visually striking movie that touched on meta themes about art, its creators and its critics.

Washington plays Malcolm, a director who just got back from a screening of his new movie about the tragedy of a woman's battle with drugs. The dispute between him and his girlfriend, played by Zendaya, starts because he forgot to thank her at the screening. From there, the film delves into the psychology of the two leads. Both of them deliver amazing performances, especially Zendaya. I know it's somewhat of a stereotype for former Disney stars to go off the deep end after their childhood careers, but there are some who break through and prove themselves to be terrific actors. Zendaya is now one of those actors.

Washington, after roles in "BlacKkKlansman" and "Tenet," is showing to be a true acting force to look out for. His performance in this proves he truly is a master at his craft.

The themes director and writer Sam Levinson bring up are intriguing ones, but it can sometimes feel a little jarring switching from commentary on critic culture and the relationship between Malcolm and Marie.

I did sympathize with Malcolm where he has an almost six-minute rant about a critic and her missing the point of why his film was impactful. As a critic, I 100% understand his frustration toward critics who are far too often like this.

The film also goes on a little too long. Though it is just under two hours, it felt way longer than that. If maybe 20 minutes were cut, it would have been more impactful and I would have cared more for where their relationship was headed. The arguments they have, while intriguing at first, were repetitive after a while.

"Malcolm & Marie" feels confused with its themes at times, but does offer an intriguing look at couples and critic culture.

# Review: 25 years with 'The Score'

**By Chris Crymes**
Entertainment Editor

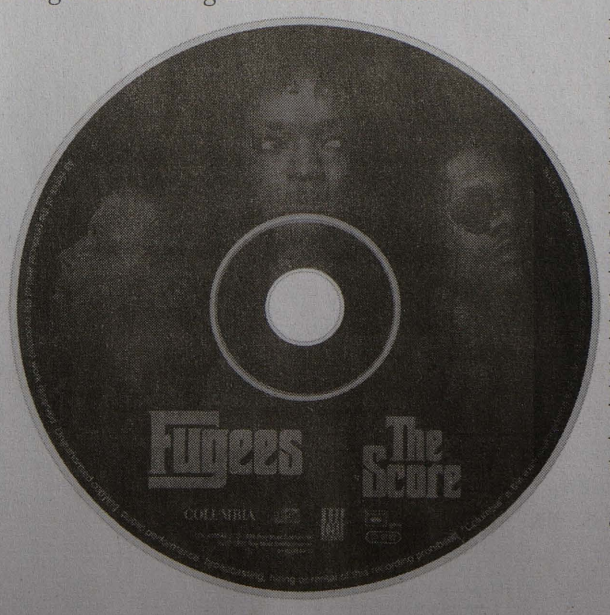
In 1996, hip-hop needed a new hero. Tupac Shakur had been killed that September, and Christopher Wallace, or The Notorious B.I.G., would follow less than a year later. Top songs at the time included a potpourri of gentrified genres being slowly taken back by musicians of color with the Billboard Top 100 being filled with the likes of Mariah Carey, Boyz II Men, Mary J. Blige and The Tony Rich Project. All of these projects did tend to sound like the usual chart-topping fare. Crisply recorded instruments moving with the sterile precision only studios and studio musicians can create. In a mainstream world with only one idea of a rap album, The Fugees would climb the charts and make their claim in history with an album that told a story instead of just cold, hard bars.

Lauryn Hill described "The Score" to interviewers in 1996 as "an audio film. It's like radio was back in the 1940s. It tells a story, and there are cuts and breaks in the music. It's almost like a hip-hop version of 'Tommy', like what The Who did for rock music."

That comparison to an album and a film is perfect. Not to speak ill of the album creation process, but putting a film together is a perfect blending of a million different art forms and that's exactly what makes "The Score" so special.

Combining acrobatic rhyme schemes, hauntingly beautiful melodies, world-class features, bombastic characters and uncompromising depictions of life in the ghetto, The Fugees build a world of audio variety to construct this musical narrative.

In "The Beast," Hill showcases her talents for flow and brilliant lyricism, not only keeping up with but outrapping her fellow bandmates for the whole song before ending in a hilarious sketch where two members are attacked by a kung-fu master.




Graphic by Chris Crymes

Undeniable classics, "Fu-Gee-La," "Killing Me Softly With His Song" and "Ready or Not" blend the group's approaches even further, resulting in these songs becoming the album's chart toppers.

But the chart toppers aren't all the album offers. "Family Business" belongs on any 90s rap playlist for verses alone. A personal favorite, "The Mask," waxes poetic about the requirements of physical and metaphorical masks in the age we live in. "The Score" carries an assortment of genres, sounds and audio sampling.

"The Score" also presents an alternative view of a group hotly debated in the western world: refugees. The years preceding "The Score" housed two tragedies that led to mass exoduses: 1994's Rwandan genocide at the hands of armed militias and the murder of 8,000 Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica. These events led to refugee reception that mirrors the recent refugee crises from places like Syria. One of the most egregious examples of anti-refugee sentiments coming from the UK paper The Sun, calling refugees "cockroaches" and a burden on the free nations they seek help from.

"The Score" dared to depict refugees in an almost mythical light. Like in "Ready or Not," when Pras raps, "I, refugee from Guantanamo Bay / Dance around the border, like I'm Cassius Clay." But the refugees will not take to their prescribed places in society quietly. An average "place" for an immigrant is to take to life and pray that no one notices them due to prejudiced views on them. A life one is proud of is one that is out of reach for many, and that is the titular "Score." In this album told like a Blaxploitation movie, The Fugees hold up the American system like a casino heist to get "The Score" of a life everyone deserves.

Sadly, this was the last album The Fugees released. Members Wyclef Jean and Pras continued careers to varying success, but neither would reach the same accolades as their fellow member Lauryn Hill. To me, Hill's immense talents make this project come together so perfectly. She embodies the warrior poet; attacking beats with lyrics so smooth and elegant, one would think they were developed by Mercedes. Pepper in her singing abilities that go toe to toe with any of the all-time greats and you have the making of possibly the most underrated artist of all time. Her solo follow-up album, "The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill" won the coveted Best Album Grammy award in 1998, and lives as one of time's greatest albums to many.

If you're in for a legendary hip-hop album, stream "The Score" on all major streaming services.

# Black Student Association welcomes all to join

**By Madison Heiser**
Editor-in-Chief

The Tyler Junior College Black Student Association was formed in 2009 as a support organization directed toward the African American community and culture. The BSA is open to students of all races and continues to operate on campus with the objective of providing a historical and cultural view of the African American race, according to the organization's OrgSync page.

BSA adviser Erica Thurman discussed the organization's goals and background.

"We stand to enhance the African Diaspora with a mission and purpose of promoting campus involvement, doing community service with the school and community or wherever needed," Thurman said. "The Black Student Association is a group that stimulates our students' intellectual, political, cultural and social growth."

Thurman said the BSA currently has 32 active members and meets every Thursday over Zoom to discuss current events on campus and find community service activities. The BSA hosts various events such as mental health talks, scavenger hunts and TikTok challenges. According to Thurman, the BSA also focuses on academic success and has attended several leadership conferences and college campus tours for students.

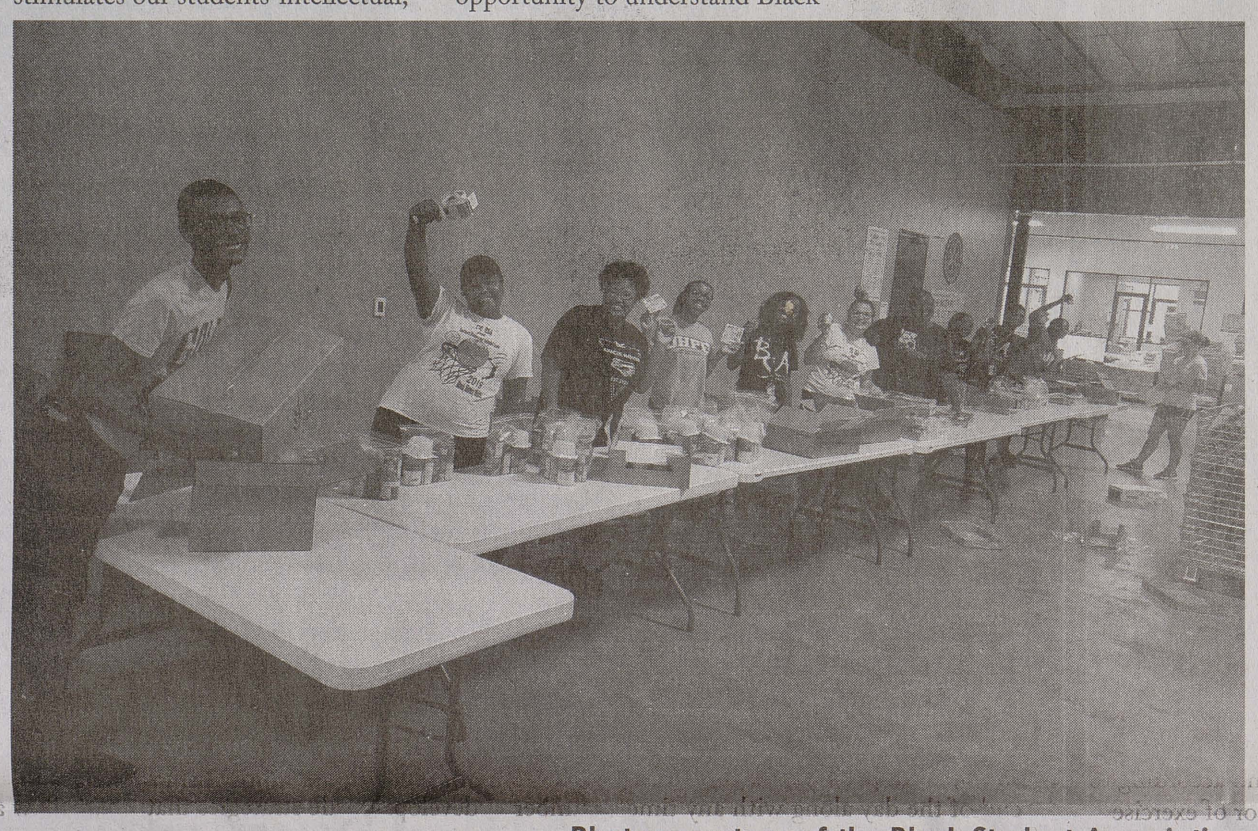
Praise Thomas, president of the BSA, discussed the significance of Black History Month to BSA members.

"This month is very important to us because it's an opportunity for us to grow more as an organization and learn about ourselves and others," Thomas said. "A continued engagement with history is vital as it helps give context for the present. Black History Month is an opportunity to understand Black histories, going beyond stories of racism and slavery to spotlight Black achievement."

Thurman added honoring Black history and achievement no longer has to be done in one month, suggesting TJC could incorporate Black history by partnering with the Black History Museum of Tyler, inviting African American officials to discuss their journeys into office, and inviting Black TJC alumni to speak to students. Thurman said educating students about Black history allows people of different backgrounds to "come together to share not only what makes us different, but that which draws us closer."

For more information about the BSA and their activities, as well as ways to join, contact Thurman by email at ethu@tjc.edu. Students can also visit the BSA's OrgSync page at orgsync.tjc.edu/organization/black-student-assocation.

**Photos courtesy of the Black Student Association**
Members of TJC's Black Student Association sit after keeping their sponsored section of the campus clean. This is just one of many services they performed last October.



**Photos courtesy of the Black Student Association**
BSA members are involved in various community services. For example, members volunteered at the East Texas Food Bank in September 2019, as pictured above.

> "Come together to share not only what makes us different, but that which draws us closer."
> -Erica Thurman, Black Student Association adviser

# Texas African American Museum preserves local and national history

**By Andrea Valdez**
Broadcast News Director

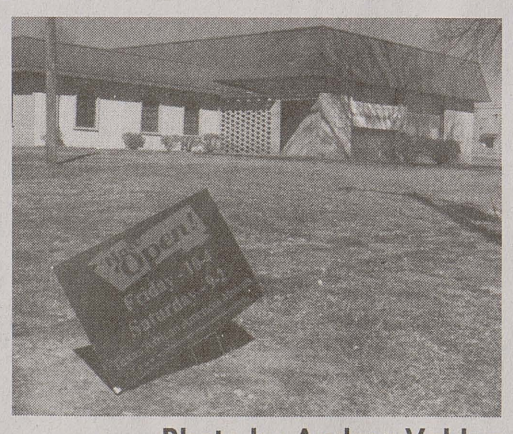


**Photo by Andrea Valdez**

The Texas African American Museum is a new attraction in Tyler that started to educate and inform visitors about African American history and culture, both on the regional and national level.

"History is important to all of us. Whether it is Black, white, Hispanic or any other form of history, it is important for individuals to preserve history and recognize it," said Gloria Washington, executive director for the Texas African American Museum.

In 2018, TAAM did not have a standing building and was exclusively on social media. Today, the museum is on its third standalone location and is working to expand its space. The previous two locations were originally located on Erwin and near Griffin Elementary School but are no longer in those locations.

"The city gifted us this building Nov. 12, 2020, and we moved in shortly thereafter," Washington said.

The founding members for the museum are Gloria Washington and Clarence Shackelford. The building where the museum stands used to be the city's fire station, which the city of Tyler donated.

According to the Empowerment Community Development Cooperation website, it is a 501(c) organization "with a focus on education, arts, tourism, veteran services, scholarships, grants, youth mentorship, history preservation, community development, housing and economic power, small and minority owned businesses." The museum is a 501(c)(3) organization, making it a nonprofit organization under the support of the Empowerment CDC.

"The museum is under the auspice of Empowerment Community Development Cooperation (Empowerment CDC, which is our parent company," Washington said.

February is known as Black History Month. Created by Carter G. Woodson in 1926 as one week expanded to a month by 1976 to highlight the accomplishments of Black Americans in the U.S. TAAM is honoring the month through tributes to African American females throughout history and artifacts that are on display.

"Right now, we are honoring African American females that have contributed to society and plus we're doing tour in groups of five, but you have to be COVID conscious and follow the COVID protocol. You must wear a mask and you must social distance," Washington said.

African American females being honored are Bessie Coleman, who is the first African American woman to be a pilot; current Vice President Kamala Harris, the first African American woman in this leadership position; and Tyler native Willie Lee Glass, whom the Glass Recreation Center in Tyler is named after.

Admission is free for the museum, but the TAAM is hoping to expand the space of the museum with the help of visitors and the community through donations. Donations can be dropped off at the museum on Fridays and Saturdays during opening hours where someone at the front will collect the donation or by check addressed to the Texas African American Museum.

"We are trying to raise a million dollars so that we can renovate and restore the building because," Washington said. They are attempting to raise the money for the building because, "it was not in tip top shape when we received the building from the city," Washington said.

The museum is located at 309 W Martin Luther King Jr Blvd in Tyler, and it is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Fridays and from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays.

# TJC should open OHPE for mental, physical health of students

## Staff Editorial

Tyler Junior College has decided to keep the Ornelas Health and Physical Education Center closed until the end of the health crisis despite the fact that Gov. Gregg Abbott issued an order allowing gyms to open to 75% capacity in September.

Beginning May 18, 2020, gyms and exercise facilities were reopened at limited capacity in Texas under Abbott's order. Recreation in a safe environment has been successful in Texas because of the willingness of members to follow recommended cleaning standards. Texans are following gym safety guidelines because they want to work on their physical health, but also because they want to develop their mental health.

According to texasfamilyfitness.com, "exercise itself increases norepinephrine, a chemical within your brain that moderates your response to stress." With the closure of the OHPE, TJC is disregarding the physical and mental health needs of students.

TJC issued a statement on its website, tjc.edu/OHPE, about its decision to close the OHPE on Aug. 7, 2020. "Because instruction is the core of our mission at TJC, we take numerous precautions and a certain degree of risk for instruction, but we cannot take the risk for recreational activities during this health crisis. Therefore, we have come to the difficult decision that it is best to close the OHPE except for instructional purposes (which include both academic and some continuing education courses). Unfortunately, the pool is closed for all usage."

Heath Stoner, the director of the OHPE, reiterated what activities the OHPE has been used for in the past months. "Although not available for recreational use, the building was still used for academic classes, Dance Academy and intramurals. It was also used by the Apache Band and Apache Belles," Stoner said. Because the OHPE has been accessible for some groups, it's clear they have some protocols in place to handle having groups of students access the facilities. Therefore, TJC should take it a step further and give all students access for recreational purposes. This access would benefit students already struggling with mental health. According to waldenu.edu, "Even just moderate exercise throughout the week can improve depression and anxiety."

Stoner says the OHPE is not open for recreation, and the official TJC message says they cannot, "take the risk for recreational activities during this health crisis," but what are intramural sports, if not recreational? While it is understandable why the OHPE shut down at first, Texas gyms and fitness centers have been allowed to reopen for nine months. TJC should follow suit.

The statement issued by TJC says the pool is closed for all usage, but Dr. Tim Drain, the associate vice provost for student affairs, said, "The pool is only used in the event athletics needs it as part of an athlete's rehabilitation from an injury." So, the pool is unavailable to students who could benefit in a physical, emotional, mental and spiritual way from working out, but it is still available to the athletic department's injured athletes. There should be no special exception for any group of students to use the closed facilities, they should be opened to all students.

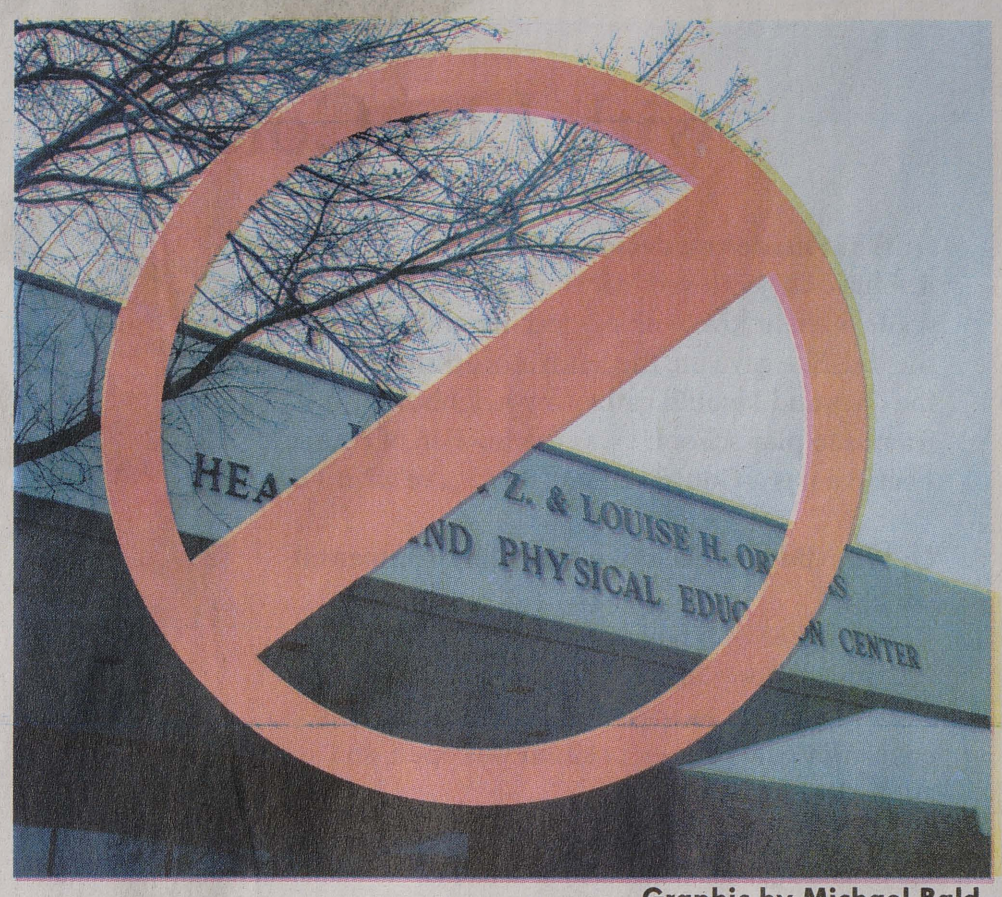
Other colleges and gyms are following Abbott's order that states, "gyms and exercise facilities and classes may operate up to 75% of the total listed occupancy of the gym or exercise facility."

The University of Texas at Tyler has implemented a new schedule to keep their recreation center open. According to Peyton Thomas, a staff member at the Herrington Patriot Center, the center closes every hour and 40 minutes to clean. This allows for 20 minutes of cleaning in between students coming in. They also use a "lap lane reservation sheet," Thomas said, as a way to schedule who can use the lap lanes at what time.

The University of Texas at Arlington has specific protocols for their pool. According to uta.edu, "users of the pool will be required to reserve a time if they wish to use the pool." Not only does UTA require reservations, but they also mention "lanes will be blocked off in 1-hour increments (50 minutes of swim time) and 10 minutes of cleaning/prep time for next group of swimmers."

Northeast Texas Community College has its recreation center open, and according to Dr. Tom Seabourne, professor of exercise science at NTCC, the first thing they do is ask guests if they have had symptoms. If they have had symptoms, they inquire if the student has had a test at the campus front desk. More precautions they take include having sanitary wipes to clean machines before and after every use, requiring masks and distancing, and closing off their showers and water fountains.

The Parks Fitness Center at Kilgore College has not had a single case go through their doors since reopening because of careful monitoring of groups and machines used, Blake McCrary, the gym manager at the fitness center, said. McCrary said they're only open to students and current members, they have a rigorous cleaning schedule and they provide hand sanitizer. The cleaning schedule of the fitness center is a manual wipe down of the facility every 30 minutes, and a sanitizing ioniser gun every hour. In terms of athletics using the facilities, they limit groups to 15 members per workout, and then clean afterward allowing for contact tracing. "I would be willing to talk to anyone to help with their decision process on a safe reopening," McCrary said.



Graphic by Michael Bald

Stephen F. Austin State University is also finding innovative ways to provide safe recreation for its students. For example, at their rock wall, they have a number of protocols. According to sfasu.edu, "equipment checkout is limited to climbing shoes," and "pads will be disinfected at the end of the day along with any time a climber falls on the pad with any part of the body other than the feet." The rock wall is also open on alternating sides each day allowing each side to air dry for 24 hours.

Not only are surrounding colleges taking initiative to provide a safe workout space for their students, but many local gyms, are continuing to care for their members in a proactive way.

Anytime Fitness in the Green Acres Shopping Village has implemented scheduled professional cleaning. Jake Hardin, the general manager at Anytime Fitness, said they hired a professional cleaner who comes into the gym five days a week. Also, to account for social distancing they have the cardio equipment separated, leaving every other one out of order.

The Box, a gym in Bullard, has been keeping protocols and growing memberships since reopening. Aaron Laird, the owner of The Box, said they clean the gym five times a day, "sterilizing equipment and floors after every workout," Laird said. The Box also encourages members to talk to the staff if they feel uncomfortable with any failure to follow protocol.

If TJC is going to open the OHPE for select groups, they should immediately open it to all students to use as an organized recreational outlet. Students should be concerned that their college is not offering them an area for exercise.

TJC should take initiative and spend time developing safe strategies that could allow all of its students to have access to the OHPE. These strategies should include reservation workouts, cleaning protocols in between those reserved workouts, and bins for clean and used equipment like kick boards, weights, and other hand-held objects. Not only should there be reservation workouts, but there should be scheduled daily cleaning with stronger chemicals. TJC could easily transfer already implemented procedures for the college, such as social distancing and mask wearing, into the gym. They could easily transfer these protocols and begin looking at colleges around them, which are successfully running their programs.

Knowing the OHPE has the ability to open safely while following the Texas statewide protocols makes me wonder why TJC recreation has been closed for this long. It is time that all TJC students have equal access to the OHPE.

| EAST TEXAS COLLEGES / FITNESS CENTERS | OPEN | CLOSED |
|---|---|---|
| Tyler Junior College | | X |
| Kilgore College | X | |
| Panola College | X | |
| Trinity Valley Community College | X | |
| Northeast Texas Community College | X | |
| University of Texas, Tyler | X | |
| Stephen F. Austin State University | X | |
| University of Texas, Arlington | X | |
| Planet, Crunch, Anytime Fitness (Tyler) | X | |

*This list shows the openings and closures of local college and university fitness centers and community fitness centers as of Feb. 25.*

Graphic by Michael Bald

# Q&A

## with Lisa Cole, Environmental Biology Professor

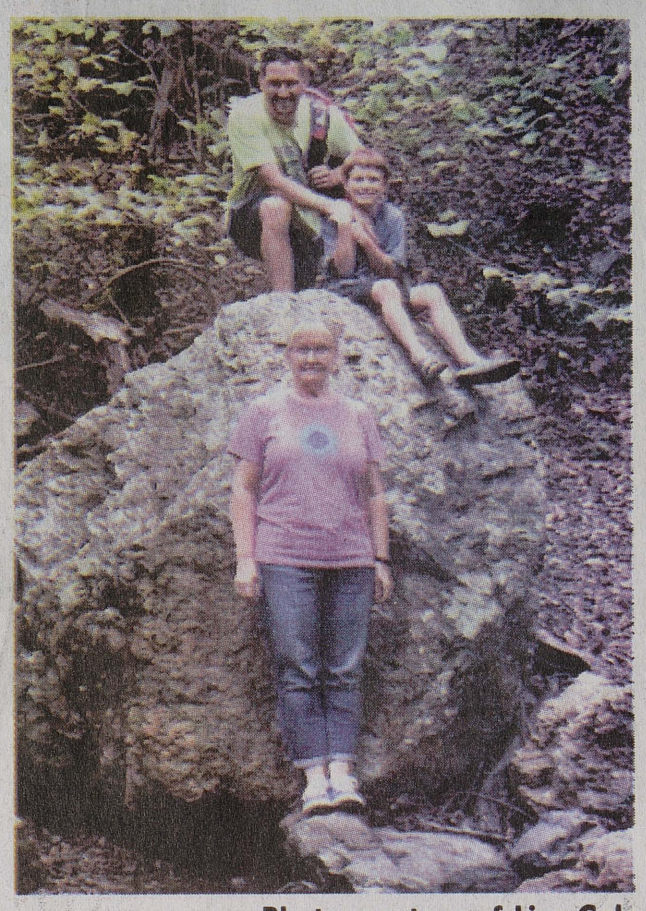


Photo courtesy of Lisa Cole

**Q: What made you decide to teach?**
*A:* I have always loved learning. In the second grade, I fell in love with my teacher and everything she did. She gave me the leftover worksheets from the class and I would gather my neighborhood friends to play school. I was the teacher, of course! I believe it is a God-given gift, and I love what I do.

**Q: Why did you decide to teach Environmental Biology?**
*A:* My degree is in biology and health. I began teaching biology labs here at TJC as an adjunct. When I decided to apply for full time, the environmental biology position was open, so I applied and was hired.

**Q: How long have you been a teacher?**
*A:* This is my 20th year as a teacher.

**Q: Have you taught other subjects besides environmental biology? If so, what subjects?**
*A:* I began my teaching career as a public school teacher. I have taught biology, health, anatomy and physiology, and Earth science. Here at TJC I currently teach Intro Anatomy and Physiology as an adjunct. I have also taught majors and non-majors biology as an adjunct.

**Q: Did you ever consider a different career path?**
*A:* Yes. I took the entrance test for nursing and scored well, but I couldn't go through with the plan because I determined that I could never give shots. I still get a bit woozy when confronted with a needle of any kind. I also worked for NASA Johnson Space Center as an education manager for a program called Texas Aerospace Scholars. While I enjoyed the position and the students, it just wasn't the same as teaching on a regular basis.

**Q: What has been your most memorable experience as a teacher?**
*A:* A group of my biology students designed an experiment to be tested in the anti-gravity airplane at NASA Johnson Space Center and it was accepted. We spent seven days at Johnson space center and conducted the experiment in zero gravity conditions. It was definitely a highlight in my career as a teacher.

**Q: What is your favorite part about teaching?**
*A:* The students. Definitely the students. I have been very blessed to know so many and have an opportunity to share a small portion of their journey in life and hopefully deposit knowledge they will use at some point.

**Q: What is your favorite thing about teaching environmental biology?**
*A:* I enjoy sharing my love of nature and the basic workings of our environment with my students. I enjoy seeing them experience the world around them, and I hope they will carry this knowledge with them into their adult lives.

**Q: How does it make you feel when a student begins to understand a subject that they didn't previously understand?**
*A:* That is the true satisfaction in the job that I do. If they walk away with a little more knowledge and a confidence that they are capable of learning whatever is put in front of them, then I feel successful as an educator.

**Q: Is anyone else in your family a teacher?**
*A:* My late husband was a teacher and my father-in-law was a teacher and principal. One of my sons is working on being a teacher right now. My brother and sister-in-law are teachers, as well as their daughter and son-in-law. I also have several cousins who are teachers. When my nephew was small he asked his parents, "Do I have to be a teacher?!"

**Interview conducted by Hannah Johnson, contributing writer**

# Budget advice helps students on spending, saving

**By Mary Mone and Madison Heiser**
Online Editor and Editor-in-Chief

College is a time that can make or break people financially, and it can be challenging learning how to manage money and still be able to have fun. A budget is a personal financial plan used to predict and account for money earned and spent every month. In budgeting, it is important to balance goals and limitations, and these depend on a person's financial needs.

According to the studentaid.gov, the first step in creating a budget is to look into what goes into personal income and expenses. This means to look into how much money is made, how much money needs to be spent, and how much money needs to be saved. Students should first be aware of their total monthly income. They should then make a chart of their expenses including bills, gas, food and other costs. The most important expenses should be subtracted from the budget first – needs that account for shelter, food, transportation and other necessities. With the remaining money, students can factor in less important expenses, or "wants," such as entertainment, shopping, etc.

A general rule of thumb for money-saving is the 50-30-20 model. According to NerdWallet, this rule designates 50% of an individual's income should be spent on needs, 30% should be spent on wants, and 20% should be placed into savings. Depending on a student's income, this can be difficult to achieve and there may be less room for wants. However, it is still important for individuals to place a portion of their income in a savings account for emergencies and unexpected expenses. This provides a cushion for students to stay afloat financially after unexpected changes.

When establishing a budget, it is best to underestimate one's income while overestimating one's expenses. This means students should base their budget off the "low end" of their income estimates. They should then round up all expenses to the "high end" of their estimated costs. This prevents individuals from maxing out their budgets while increasing the chance of having leftover spending money for wants each month. For example, if an individual makes $558 a month and needs to pay an insurance bill for $47 a month, rounding expenses to $50 and income to $550 could potentially provide $3 to $11 in "extra" money after expenses.

One financial factor that many college students forget about is credit. Most students do not have established credit, which is important in making significant financial decisions like buying a house, car, or applying for loans. A good way to build credit for future endeavors is to apply for a credit card. Companies such as Discover offer starter credit cards specifically designed for students. These cards typically have low limits so students can practice paying off their cards on smaller purchases. According to studentaid.gov, when using a credit card, students should always be mindful of their balance and pay it off in full every month to avoid paying interest on their purchases. This means individuals should never put purchases on a credit card that exceed their budget each month.

If budgeting seems intimidating, students can take advantage of online financial resources such as banking apps and budget trackers from the convenience of their phones. Students should regularly check their bank account balances and purchase history to ensure the proper handling of their finances. Apps such as Mint and PocketGuard help individuals organize and manage their budget and expenses. A list of NerdWallet's best financial apps for 2021 can be found at nerdwallet.com/article/finance/best-budget-apps.

Graphic by Chris Crymes

There are a plethora of budgeting and saving tips online, and so much information and responsibility can make students feel overwhelmed. Nevertheless, everyone's financial situation is different, meaning every budget is different, as well. College students should take some time to find out which budgeting formula works best for them.

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